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EASTERN EUROPEAN INTELLIGENCER OCI #0697/68

5 March 1968

East Germans Protest Bundestag Week in West Berlin

Neues Deutschland on 4 March printed a statement of the East German Foreign Ministry protesting in the "sharpest" manner the "provocative" Bundestag Committee meetings being held in West Berlin. It asserted that these "illegal" actions reflected "West German imperialism's policy of aggression" and endangered both GDR and European security. In standard fashion, the Foreign Ministry warned that the GDR could not disregard Bonn's increasing "provocations," and stated that Bonn and West Berlin would have to bear the "full responsibility" for the consequences of these "aggressive actions." The Foreign Ministry also made the pro forma warning that the regime would take corresponding measures to protect its legitimate security interests.

Despite the GDR warning and the Soviet military activity in the Berlin area [redacted] the Mission reported that the first day of the Bundestag Week passed routinely. USCOB reported "nothing significant to report."

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The Allies did coordinate a reply to be made today to the Soviet controller in the Berlin Air Safety Center (BASC) concerning the 3 March overflight of West Berlin by two Soviet helicopters. The Allied response will avoid arguing the question whether the helicopters actually flew over West Berlin, but will state concern that the flights were made without BASC's clearance.

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Budapest Meeting Reportedly to End Today

AP correspondent Henry Bradsher reports from Budapest that the Preparatory Meeting will end today. Activity on the floor of the meeting continues as a procession of lesser parties squeeze their statements into the lengthening minutes of the meeting. The only real substantive problem facing the meeting is the drafting of the final communique. Bradsher claims that Zoltan Komocsin, the principal Hungarian coordinator of the meeting, has implied that each party has veto power

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over the final draft of the communique. If this is the case, the final communique should be a hash of compromises and universally acceptable pabulum. The communique will probably call for an International Communist Conference (ICC) sometime this November or December in Moscow with discussion of anti-imperialist strategy as the principle or sole objective and it will probably call for the setting up of a preparatory commission for the ICC. [REDACTED]

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East German Reaction To Rumanian Walkout

East Germany, whose delegate to the Budapest conference distinguished himself by making the most dogmatic and rigid speech heard at the conference, reacted in expected fashion to the Rumanian walkout. In an editorial signed by the paper's chief reporter at the conference, Neues Deutschland described the Rumanian delegation's demands as "uncompromising," and stated that the Rumanians themselves bear the full and complete responsibility for their move. Neues Deutschland found that Niculescu-Mizil's assertions that events at the conference had taken place in an undemocratic manner to be "astonishing," and pointed out that the Rumanian had spoken most often and used up much of the time allotted to speakers. [REDACTED]

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COMMENT: As the Mission points out, although it indicts the Rumanians, ND's editorial is relatively restrained in tone. There is none of Erich Honecker's hard-hitting condemnation of nationalist tendencies, and the editorial holds out a hand to Rumania by stating that all parties should attend a world-wide conference later this year.

Two Polish Deputy Foreign Ministers to Lose Jobs

Deputy Foreign Trade Ministers Jozef Kutin and Franciszek Modrzewski will soon be transferred from the ministry and their jobs abolished [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] Kutin, who is Jewish, probably will move to the Economic Planning Commission, and Modrzewski probably will be appointed ambassador to Belgium. The shifts are part of a reorganization of the Foreign Ministry to improve efficiency and stimulate foreign trade. [REDACTED]

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COMMENT: This information accords with previous reports that lower-level shifts in the government-party apparatus would be implemented in coming months as a prelude to more significant leadership changes which probably will occur in connection with the scheduled party congress later this year. Foreign Trade Minister Trampczynski indicated last month that the preliminary shifts would involve mainly the reduction of the number of deputy ministers in various ministries, beginning with his own. The party plenum held on 27-28 February confirmed that organizational changes are planned in the foreign trade apparatus.

Kutin may have been in political trouble already last summer, when there were rumors that he had been ousted. The liberal, pro-Western Modrzewski, however, will be the real loss to the ministry.

No Easter Passes For Berliners

As expected, the East Germans have sharply criticized and in effect rejected Governing Mayor Klaus Schuetz's offer to negotiate on Easter passes. Neues Deutschland on 4 March replied to Schuetz's 28 February letter by criticizing the mayor and indicating that so long as the West Berlin leaders refuse to establish "normal" relations between West Berlin and the GDR, there can be no hope of an agreement.

Neues Deutschland also used the occasion to launch a bitter attack on Schuetz's efforts to tie West Berlin to the FRG, and on the alleged campaign being conducted against the GDR from West Berlin.

Schuetz acknowledged publicly on 2 March that he had sent a letter to East Berlin. He also indicated his readiness to obtain "regularized relations" with the East Germans, but added that no reasonable offer was at hand.

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Yugoslav Leader Calls for More Republic Autonomy

Stane Kavcic, premier of Slovenia, has made his strongest call yet for increased republic autonomy during his current visit to Macedonia. Kavcic advocated "that the center, the federation, be disburdened to a

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certain extent," and that its jurisdiction be confined "to substantive, basic, useful, and indispensable common things." Rejecting the fears of those who believe that such a course would result in a change to a confederation and the eventual disintegration of Yugoslavia, Kavcic in effect demanded that there be no "empty discussions about the name." The Slovenian leader also made the unusual remark "that we excessively nationalized some things and left too little latitude for private enterprise, to individual initiative, and to the concern of the person for his own welfare." [REDACTED]

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COMMENT: Kavcic and his Macedonian hosts have become the most outspoken advocates of increased republic autonomy. If only basic functions, such as national defense, foreign affairs, and the formulation of broad economic policy and trade regulations, were left to the federation, Yugoslavia would indeed be practically turned into a confederation.

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NOTE: THE VIEWS EXPRESSED ABOVE REPRESENT ONLY THE ANALYSIS OF THE EE DIVISION

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